



Senator Feinstein Reiterates Call for Passage of Strong ID Theft Legislation

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Washington, DC – In the wake of new revelations about the loss of personal information of U.S. service members and veterans, U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif) today reiterated her call for passage of strong identity theft legislation that requires that Americans be notified when their personal information has been compromised.

Senator Feinstein has offered legislation to protect consumers from identity theft, including a consumer notification bill, a bill to prohibit the sale or display of social security numbers to the public, and a comprehensive opt-in/opt-out privacy bill.

It was revealed today that the personal information of 2.2 million active duty, reserve, and National Guard troops has been put at risk of identity theft. This comes on the heels of the disclosure that the Department of Veterans Affairs lost the information for up to 26.5 million veterans.

“This latest disclosure indicates that no one is immune from identity theft,” Senator Feinstein said. **“I have been fighting an uphill battle for the past six years to put in place strong protections – so that personal information is less available and consumers are notified when their identities are at risk. Yet, Congress has failed to act – largely because the financial industry does not want their activities restricted.**

Now we are beginning to see the cost of this inaction. It often takes more than two years and tens of thousands of dollars to restore an identity. This is the last thing that should be on our service member’s minds at a time of war.

The time has come to pass a strong notification bill that makes sure that consumers are notified when their identities are at risk. This is the least we can do for our men and women in uniform.”

Specifically, the Feinstein notification bill would:

- Provide important assistance to victims, including allowing individuals to put a seven-year fraud alert on their credit report;

- Lay out specific requirements for what must be included in notices to those at risk, including a description of the data that may have been compromised, a toll-free number people can call to learn what information and which individuals have been put at risk, and the numbers and addresses for three major credit reporting agencies; and
- Provide tougher civil penalties — \$1,000 per individual the offending institution fails to notify up to a maximum of \$50,000 per day while the failure to notify continues.

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